

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06

CCO-00 SAB-01 SAM-01 IO-13 ACDA-10 /103 W

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8795

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4857

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: JULY 23 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORT SYRO-PALESTINIAN

TALKS PROCEEDING TOWARD POSITIVE RESULTS

1. SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTED THAT TALKS BETWEEN PALESTINIAN DELEGATION LED BY QADDUMI AND SYRIAN GROUP LED BY KHADDAM SHOWING SIGNS OF SUCCESS. GROUPS MET TWICE JULY 22, FIRST TO HEAR PRESENTATION OF PLO VIEWPOINT AND THEN IN EVENING FOR KHADDAM'S OUTLINE OF SYRIAN POINTS. ABU MAYZAR STATED TALKS HELD IN "EXTREMELY FRIENDLY AND POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE," AND ADDED THAT "WE WILL CONTINUE THESE MEETINGS AND DEFINITELY WILL REACH POSITIVE RESULTS." KHADDAM PRAISED

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"BROTHERLY SPIRIT" IN WHICH DISCUSSIONS CONDUCTED, AND

NOTED THAT BOTH SIDES SHOWING "COMPLETE FRANKNESS."
KHADDAM STATED THAT "WE WILL CONTINUE MEETINGS IN ATTEMPT
TO REACH (AGREEMENT ON) IDEAS."

2. PRESS CITED ARTICLE BY EGYPTIAN ROSE AL-YUSUF CALLING
FOR APPOINTMENT OF SALAH KHALAF AS FATAH COMMANDER AND
PLO LEADER SINCE HE HAD ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONFRONT-
ING SYRIAN FORCES. DAMASCUS PRESS POINTED OUT THAT NO
MENTION MADE OF EVENTUAL STATUS OF YASIR ARAFAT BY
EGYPTIAN MAGAZINE.

3. AT RALLY HELD PREVIOUS EVENING TO COMMEMORATE ANNIVERSARY
OF JULY 23 EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION, LEBANESE MEMBER OF BAATH
PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND, SUHAYL SUKKARIYAH, COMPARED ASAD'S
EFFORTS TO UNITE ARABS WITH THOSE OF NASSER, PLEDGED UN-
DIMINISHED SYRIAN SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN CAUSE, "BECAUSE
PALESTINE IS SOUTHERN PART OF SYRIA." HE ASSERTED PALESTINE
REMAINED SYRIA'S MAJOR PREOCCUPATION WHILE OTHERS INVOLVED
LEBANESE EVENTS HAVE TURNED THEIR BACKS UPON PALESTINIAN
CAUSE IN ORDER TO SERVE SINAI ACCORD "WHICH DISRUPTED
ARAB SOLIDARITY AND LED TO DEATHS OF THOUSANDS OF LEBANESE
AND PALESTINIANS." HE NOTED THAT SYRIA DECLARED ITS OPPOSITION
TO ACCORD THREE DAYS LATER; HE WONDERED WHY JUMBLATT
STILL REFRAINED FROM STATING HIS VIEW TOWARD AGREEMENT.
HE CONCLUDED THAT LEBANESE CRISIS CONSTITUTES "BATTLE
TO COVER-UP DEFEATIST SINAI ACCORD AND TO HELP AMERICAN
SETTLEMENTS TO SPLIT ARAB SOLIDARITY AND EXTERMINATE
PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION." LEBANESE NASSERITE LEADER
KAMAL SHATILA REMINDED AUDIENCE THAT "LEFTIST (REFORM)
PROGRAM WAS APPROVED AND PRAISED BY DEAN BROWN BECAUSE IT
MADE NO REFERENCE TO EASTERN FRONT AND ARABISM OF LEBANON."
SHATILA CALLED FOR RESTORATION OF COHESION BETWEEN PLO,
SYRIA AND LEBANESE NATIONALIST FORCES.

4. SYRIAN MEDIA HAVE AS YET MADE NO REFERENCE TO PRESIDENT
SADAT'S SPEECH.

5. MEDIA CONTINUED TO PRAISE ASAD'S SPEECH, AND CITED
COMMENTARY BY ARAB DIPLOMATIC SOURCE WHO OPINED THAT
SYRIA WOULD REMAIN HEART OF ARABISM, WOULD MANAGE TO
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FOIL "PLOT" AND PREVENT PASSAGE OF DEFEATIST SETTLEMENTS
AND WAS TRYING TO ALERT PALESTINIANS TO DANGER CONFRONTING
THEM BEFORE IT TOO LATE.

6. AL-BAATH COLUMNIST WARNED AGAINST THOSE WHO CHAMPION
CAUSE OF REACHING UNDERSTANDING WITH U.S. HE CLAIMED THAT
AMERICA HAS OFFERED NOTHING TO ARAB GOVERNMENTS SUBSTANTIAL
ENOUGH TO CONVINCE THEM THAT U.S. CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE

IN SOLVING NATIONAL ISSUES. ON CONTRARY, "AMERICA IS
BEHIND ATTEMPTS AIMED AT STRIKING PLO BY DRAGGING IT INTO
LEBANESE FIGHT." COL. IZZ AL-DIN IDRIS WROTE IN TISHRIIN
THAT AMB. BROWN HAD INSTRUCTED HIS LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN

"FRIENDS" TO CONFUSE SITUATION BY BOTH OPPOSING AND
SUPPORTING SYRIAN POSITION. FOREIGN AND ARAB INFORMATION
MEDIA DEPICTED SYRIA POSITION IN LEBANON AS OPPOSING
PALESTINIANS. THIS FORMED BASIS FOR AMERICAN STATEMENTS
OF SUPPORT FOR (DISTORTED) SYRIAN POSITION.

7. SYRIAN RADIO COMMENTARY CLAIMED THAT DEPARTMENT SPOKES-
MAN HAD ADMITTED U.S. ARMS REACHED LEBANON. THIS INDIRECTLY
CONFIRMED THAT U.S. HAD BEEN EXACERBATING CRISIS TO COVER
UP SINAI AGREEMENT.

8. COMMENT: EGYPTIAN MEDIA ATTACKS ON ASAD REPORTED CAIRO 9918
AND RENEWED SYRIAN MEDIA CRITICISM OF SINAI ACCORD MAY SIGNAL
REOPENING OF HOSTILE SYRO-EGYPTIAN MEDIA CAMPAIGNS.
MURPHY

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